

## THE DIVINE LAWS FOR THE INTERPRETATION OF THE ARABIC GLORIOUS QUR'ÂN

**2/111: "...Produce your proof if you are truthful."**

**"Those to whom We have given the Book follow it as it ought to be followed, they are the ones that believe therein. And who so disbelieves in it, those are they who are the losers."**

**[Al-Qur'ân 2:121].**

The Arabic Glorious Qur'ân itself provides the guidance for interpreting its own law, as stated in chapter 3 verse 7.. Please take note of the words, "*its own Law*". When one journeys through the Arabic Glorious Qur'ân in an attempt to understand its true message, it is important to take cognisance of the following:

The important *order*, which is laid down in the above command, is that any problem must *first* be examined *from what the Arabic Glorious Qur'ân directs*. There is no '*better explanation*' than what is contained in the Arabic Glorious Qur'ân, as is confirmed by 25:33: -

"And they cannot bring thee (Muhammad) a *mathalin* (description by way of comparison or example or question<sup>1</sup>), but We have brought the *truth* and the '*ahsan (better or best) explanation*'.<sup>2</sup>

The first is the Arabic language and the second is the decisive verses, which if used, as it ought to be used, then there should be no difficulty in uncovering its guidance. When used correctly, one ought not ever to be in conflict with the Arabic Glorious Qur'ân.

Let us examine more closely the guidance that the Arabic Glorious Qur'ân provides for its interpretation. The verse of the Arabic Glorious Qur'ân, which deals with this guidance, (and which we will analyse) is as follows:

"He it is Who has revealed the Book to you, some of its verses are *Muhkamât* (absolutely clear and lucid, decisive); they are *Ummul-Kitâb* (the core of the original foundation of all revelation; the Essence of Allâh's Will and Law. The basis of the Book and also its protector, hence the '*mother of the Book*'); and others are *Mutashâbihât* (allegorical). Then those in whose hearts is perversity follow the part of it, which is allegorical, seeking to mislead and seeking to give it (their own) interpretation. (What it means is that one is not searching for its hidden meanings). And *mâya 'lamu* (none can exhaust its): *ta'wîlahu 'illallâh* (*ta'wîlahu* = the discovering, detecting, revealing, developing or disclosing or the explaining, expounding or interpreting of which a thing is or may be reduced or that which it may come to be, [within the framework of the Qur'ânic teachings]), save Allâh. And those firmly rooted in knowledge,

<sup>1</sup> : See A. Yusuf Ali's translation of The Holy Qur'an.

<sup>2</sup> : Al-Qur'ân 25:33.

they say - 'We believe in it, it is all from our *Rabb*.<sup>3</sup> And none will grasp the message except people of understanding.'<sup>4</sup>

### THE ROOT WORD HAKAMA

**Lane's Lexicon Vol. 3 pp. 616 and 617:** *ḥakama* inf. noun of *ḥukum* – prevented, restrained, withheld him from acting in an evil or corrupt manner: Qur'an Ch. 11 v. 1: *kitābu uḥkimat āyātuhu* (a book whereof the verses are rendered valid)

*uḥkimat* – by arguments and proofs (Bd), or by command and prohibition and the statement of what is lawful and unlawful (TA), or disposed in a sound manner (Ksh, Bd) with respect to the words and meanings (Bd), like a building firmly and orderly and well constructed (Ksh), **or prevented from being corrupted** (Ksh, Bd) **and from being abrogated** (Bd), or made to be characterised by wisdom (Ksh, Bd), as comprising the sources of speculative and practical wisdom (Bd); And hence one says of a man such as is termed *ḥakim* (wise)

(I) The **first** part of the verse states:

“He it is (Allāh) Who has revealed the Book to you.”

This is true and cannot be disputed, as Allāh is the only One “Who knows *as-sir* (literally, it means: **The secret**, and in the Qur'ānic technical sense, the order and the functions of the unknown and known of creation) of the *samāwāt* (the entire universe excluding the earth) and the earth.”<sup>5</sup>

(II) The **second** part of the verse states:

“Some of its verses are *Muḥkamāt* (absolutely clear and lucid, decisive); they are *Ummul-Kitāb* (the core of the original foundation of all revelation; the Essence of Allāh's Will and Law. Furthermore, it means the basis of the Book and also its protector, hence the ‘*mother of the Book*’).”

(i) An important point to note is that the verses in the Arabic Glorious Qur'ān are categorised as being of two types: The *Muḥkamāt* and the *Mutashābihāt* verses. The above part of the verse refers to the *Muḥkamāt* verses as *Ummul-Kitāb*, which literally means the ‘*mother of the Book*’. This implies that they are in fact functioning as the protectors of the entire Book.

<sup>3</sup> : According to Ar-Rāghib al-Isfahānī, it means ‘*to nurture a thing in such a manner as to make it attain one condition after another until its goal of completion*’ Mufradāt al-fāz al-Qur'ān by ar-Rāghib al-Isfahānī. Please note that the word has different meanings when it does not refer to the Creator.

<sup>4</sup> : Al-Qur'ān 3:7.

<sup>5</sup> : Al-Qur'ān 25:6.

NB. Since the term '**mother**' and not "mothers" is used, some argue that the phrase '*mother of the Book*' does not refer to every *Muhkamât* verse.<sup>6</sup> This is not correct. Firstly, the verse uses the pronoun "they" and not "it", thus all the *Muhkamât* are referred to. Secondly, "mother" in this verse is a collective term referring to all the verses and should not be seen as a singular word. The complete statement clearly conveys the message that all the *Muhkamât* verses provide the necessary protection to safeguard the true rational meaning of the entire Book.

(ii) The meaning of the Arabic word *Muhkamât*:

The Arabic word *Muhkam* originates from its root word *Hakama* that literally means: he prevented, restrained or withheld. *Ahkama*, a word derived from *Hakama*, means: "made or rendered a thing firm or stable", "doing that which is desired" or "preventing wrong doings". The root word *Hakama* further implies that a thing is so protected that nothing can pervert or break it or interfere with it. Some infinitive verbs derived from *Hakama* are: *al-ihkâm* (= to make precise, to confirm, to strengthen), *at-tahkîm* (= to arbitrate) and *al-hukm* (= to judge)...<sup>7</sup> *Muhkam* could be like a building, made or rendered, firm, stable, strong, solid, compact, etc.; held to be secure, from falling to pieces.

(iii) The meaning of "*Muhkamât* verses":

Tabarî sees the *Muhkamât* verses as "Messages that are clear in and by themselves".<sup>8</sup> So by their very nature these verses (i.e., *Muhkamât* verses) are secured from misinterpretation. In layman's terms the *Muhkamât* (decisive) verses contain information that ought to be easily understood by the ordinary thinking individual. They are **consistent** with the Law, the nature and the order of creation. They form the foundation on which the understanding of the rest of the Qur'ân is based and thus are decisive in character. The word '*decisive*' is the adjective of the noun "decision" which means:

**"Decision**, *di-sizh'en*, n. the act or product of deciding: settlement: judgment: the quality of being decided in character. - *Adj. decisive* (*-sis'iv*), having the power of deciding: showing decision: final: positive. -*Adv.*"<sup>9</sup>

It is clear that no single English word is sufficient to convey all the properties of the *Muhkamât* verses. Nevertheless, for all practical purposes "*Muhkamât*" will henceforth be translated as "decisive".

When the *Muhkamât* (decisive) verses are used as a *measuring stick* to uncover the meaning of the allegorical verses, a meaning in line with Divine wisdom emerges.

(III) The **third** part of the verse states:

<sup>6</sup> : Textual Sources for the Study of Islam. Edited and Translated by Andrew Rippin and Jan Knappert. The University of Chicago Press 1986, p. 43.

<sup>7</sup> : Al-Mizan volume 5, p. 27.

<sup>8</sup> : The Message of The Qur'ân by Muhammad Asad, see his footnote 5 on page 66.

<sup>9</sup> : Chambers Twentieth Century Dictionary.

“And others are *Mutashâbihât* (allegorical).”

(i) The meaning of the Arabic word *Mutashâbih*:

The word *Mutashâbih* is derived from its root word *Shibh* that means: Things like or resembling one another or *likeness* or *resemblance*, that *which is co-similar* [like each other] or *conformable in its various parts*. *Mutashâbihât* are therefore *things like or resembling one another*, hence *susceptible to different interpretations*.<sup>10</sup>

(ii) The meaning that the adjective *Mutashâbih* confers upon its noun, viz. the verse:

The verses referred to, as *Mutashâbih* is susceptible to different interpretations. The meaning of the verses is therefore not to be extracted solely on face value – but that it has to be evaluated with other *Muhkamât* (decisive) verses in order to derive its true message.

The most appropriate English word for *Mutashâbihât*, although maybe not sufficient, is the term “*allegorical*”. It is derived from the word “*allegory*” which means:

“A figurative representation conveying a meaning other than and in addition to the literal. ...The etymological meaning of the word is wider than which it bears in actual use. An allegory is distinguished from a *metaphor* by being longer sustained and more fully carried out in its details, and from *analogy* by the fact that the one appeals to the imagination and the other to reason...”<sup>11</sup>

The *Mutashâbihât* verses are of different categories.

(a) ***The first category***

Those verses of which the meaning becomes known by using the clearly expressed guidance contained in the *Muhkamât* (decisive) verses. This is made clear from chapter 11:1: -

“... (This is) a Book, whose verses are characterised by *uhkimat* (wisdom), then they are made plain, from One Wise, Aware.”

This is further supported in chapter 39:23: -

“Allâh has revealed the best announcement, a Book *Mutashâbihâm-mathânî* (conformable in its various parts)...”

Therefore, the *Mutashâbihât* (allegorical) verses must not be seen in isolation, nor can a literal meaning be extracted from them without intense research and conferring them with the *Muhkamât* (decisive) verses contained in the Arabic Glorious Qur'ân, as all Qur'ânic verses are **consistent** and never in conflict with one another. It is important to remember that the literal translation of the phrase *Ummul-Kitâb* is ‘*mother of the book*’. Hence, the

<sup>10</sup> : Arabic-English Lexicon, by E. W. Lane, Vol. 1, op. cit., and Hans Wehr A dictionary of Modern Written Arabic by J Milton Cowan Fourth Edition.

<sup>11</sup> : The Encyclopædia Britannica, 14th edition 1929, Vol. 1, p. 645.

*Muhkamât* (decisive) verses should be regarded as protectors and supporters for the meaning of the *Mutashâbihât* (allegorical) verses. The *Muhkamât* (decisive) verses thus act as controllers against misconstruing information about creation. The combination of the *Muhkamât* (decisive) and the *Mutashâbihât* (allegorical and those of which the knowledge are not yet uncovered) verses contains the necessary guidance that provides the “*stimuli*” for research. They are the criteria against which humankind’s findings must be judged to ensure that interpretations of these findings are in accordance with Allâh’s laws. This is supported in the Arabic Glorious Qur’ân as follows:

“Then surely it is for Us (Allâh) to make it clear to you.” Al-Qur’ân 75:19.

Allâh Himself has arranged the verses and the chapters into one Book. He has formulated the Arabic Glorious Qur’ân in a manner that will enable us to extract most of the meaning from the Book itself.

(b) *The second category*

Those verses that refer to an intangible subject for example: (Allâh) or an object (Hereafter).

An example of a verse referring to an intangible subject - the “*being*” of Allâh:

“Vision comprehends Him not, and He comprehends (all) vision; and He is above all comprehension, the aware.”<sup>12</sup>

In another verse it states:

“There is nothing like unto Him” [Al-Qur’ân 42:11, translation of The Noble Qur’ân op. Cit.].

This makes it absolutely clear that Allâh is beyond humankind’s visionary ability to comprehend Him. The ‘1926’ “Heisenberg’s Uncertainty Principle”, as conveyed in the quote below, supports the notion that if something cannot be observed experimentally, it does not necessarily imply that it is non-existent.

“...No physical measurements can tell you that there is an electron on this table and that it is also lying still. Experiments can be made to discover where the electron is; these experiments will then destroy any possibility of finding simultaneously whether the electron is moving and if so at what speed. And conversely there is an inherent limitation on our knowledge, which appears to have been decreed “in the nature of things” [our emphasis].<sup>13</sup>

The above-mentioned verses are of such a nature that the subject/object cannot be explained in tangible terms. However, an understanding of these *Mutashâbihât* (allegorical) verses, in consonance with the general understanding of the *Muhkamât* (decisive) verses of the Arabic Glorious Qur’ân, can emerge if the *Muhkamât* (decisive) verses are properly applied. What should be understood is the fact that a Muslim bears witness to the

<sup>12</sup> : Al-Qur’ân 6:104.

<sup>13</sup> : Al-Tawhid Vol. IV, No. 4, July-September 1987, p. 66. Concerning The ‘1926’ “Heisenberg’s (1901-76, German physicist) Uncertainty Principle”.

fact that Allâh exists. The basis, on which the witnessing is based, is the fact that Allâh's creation is subjected to an order. Consequently, human beings know that **order** is planned, but the One who is responsible for the order of creation is not tangible. The *Order* or *Nature* of creation and the revelation of the *unknown* in the Arabic Glorious Qur'ân are the basis on which our witnessing of the Creator is established. Hence, when a Muslim performs the call to prayer and says: "*Ash-hadu an lâ ilâha ill-Allâh*" i.e. I bear witness that nothing deserves to be worshipped except Allâh. What it means is the confirmation of a Muslim's witnessing, which is based on the fact that human beings cannot reveal the *unknown*, which we find in the Arabic Glorious Qur'ân. Furthermore, the entire creation is in conformity with the nature and order in which Allâh has created it. We find no incongruity with natural facts and the revelation in the Arabic Glorious Qur'ân.

### SUMMARY:

The important point to remember is that any verse of the Arabic Glorious Qur'ân, which **seems** to defy factual knowledge of the universe, must be interpreted in the context of the guidance of the *Muhkamât* (decisive) verses. Thus one has to be able to distinguish between *allegorical* and *decisive* verses.

(d) The **fourth** part of verse 3:7,

"Then those in whose hearts is perversity follow the part of it which is allegorical, seeking to mislead and seeking to give it (their own) interpretation. (Meaning, not searching for its hidden meanings which are to be found in the decisive verses)",

clearly brings home the fact that the *allegorical* verses should not be taken literally. If one follows the *allegorical* verses without looking for confirmation of the interpreted meanings within the *decisive* verses, then one will be committing sin. A consequence of this sin would be retardation of one's understanding of the Arabic Glorious Qur'ân. - A penance for rejecting the guidance from Allâh. This is made clear:

"Our *Rabb*, make not our hearts to deviate **after Thou hast guided us** and grant us mercy from Thee; surely Thou art the most liberal Giver."<sup>14</sup>

(e) The **last** part of the verse holds very important information, which we need to analyse:

"And *mâya'lamu* (none can exhaust its): *ta'wîlahu 'illallâh* (*ta'wîlahu* = the discovering, detecting, revealing, developing or disclosing or the explaining, expounding or interpreting of which a thing is or may be reduced or that which it may come to be, [within the framework of the Qur'ânic teachings]), save Allâh. And those firmly rooted in knowledge, they say, 'We believe in it, it is all from our *Rabb*. And none will grasp the message except people of understanding."

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<sup>14</sup> : Al-Qur'ân 3: 8.

It is very important that we take note of the meaning of the words *māya'lamu*, as most translate it as “*none knows*” and not as “*none can exhaust its*”. The words “*none knows*” are problematic, as there are some *allegorical* verses which the meaning is known. To know the meaning of some verses is not the point. What is of importance is that no one has the capacity of knowledge to be on par with the knowledge of Almighty Allāh. Hence, it is not possible for anyone to exhaust the ‘*ta'wīlahu*’ of the Arabic Glorious Qur’ān. What does it mean? It means that the inner secrets of creation are so vast that no one will ever be able to uncover everything about it in his or her lifetime. There is simply too much to know. Hence, we have translated the words ‘*māya'lamu*’ as *none can exhaust its* ‘*ta'wīlahu*’ *illallāh*’ which means:

**“The discovering, detecting, revealing, developing or disclosing or the explaining, expounding or interpreting of which a thing is or may be reduced or that which it may come to be, within the framework of the Qur’ānic teachings), save Allāh.”**

The words:

**“And those firmly rooted in knowledge, they say, ‘We believe in it, it is all from our Rabb. And none will grasp the message except people of understanding.’”**

This means that as one progresses in uncovering the *truth* of the contents in the Arabic Glorious Qur’ān, the *truth* forces one to say: ‘We believe in it.’ Only those who have uncovered the *truth*, i.e. by the acquisition of knowledge, have the confidence to make such a declaration. If the complete truth is uncovered, one will never have any reason to develop a thought that is contrary to the Arabic Glorious Qur’ān. Hence, the last part becomes self-explanatory.

The Law of Interpretation of the Arabic Glorious Qur’ān, as explained above, outlines a system of using only decisive facts as a guideline for interpreting allegorical verses. Such a system clearly rules out any room for nonsensical-untruths! The fact that such a system is laid out in the Arabic Glorious Qur’ān by itself bears witness to the divine nature of the Arabic Glorious Qur’ān!

### (E) APPLICATION OF THE DIVINE RULES

From the above it ought to be clear that the Arabic Glorious Qur’ān is guiding one to become able to extract rational guidance from it. It removes any idea that it contains a message or terms, which includes uncertainty. To continue with the explanations, we believe it is necessary that we define the word ‘*doubt*’ as an introduction to our explanations. The Arabic word for ‘*doubt*’ is *raib*. According to an English dictionary ‘*doubt*’ means the following:

“Doubt /daut/ *n.* & *v.* –*n.* **1** a feeling of uncertainly; an undecided state of mind (*be in no doubt about; have no doubt that*). **2** (often foll. by *of*, *about*) an inclination to disbelieve (*have one’s doubts about*). **3** an uncertain state of things. **4** a lack of full proof or clear indication (*benefit of the doubt*). – *v.* **1** transitive (often foll. by *whether*, *if*, *that* + clause; also foll. (after *neg.* or

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*interrog.) by but, but that) feel uncertain or undecided about (I doubt that you are right; I do not doubt but that you are wrong)...*<sup>15</sup>

According to the Chambers' Twentieth Century Dictionary New mid-century Version, states:

**"doubt, dōwt, v.i.(= verb intransitive) to be undecided in opinion : (obs.) [=observation; obsolete] to be apprehensive..."**

However, according to the Arabic~English Lexicon dictionary the simple but effective meaning is as follows:

**"Raib... It (a thing) occasioned in me disquiet<sup>16</sup>, disturbance, or agitation, of mind... [this is the primary signification]..."**

According to the Hans Wehr dictionary it means:

**"Raib doubt; suspicion; uncertainty – raib (bi-lâ) no doubt, undoubtedly, doubtless; lâ raiba fih (raiba) there is no doubt about it..."**

According to the *Vocabulary of the Holy Qur'an* compiled by Dr. Abdullah Abbas Nadwi it means:

**"Raib doubt, suspect (n.)"**

Referring to the important statement made in the Arabic Glorious Qur'ân, which informs one that the message of the Arabic Glorious Qur'ân contains '**no doubt**', is of cardinal importance to understand, that is, if one wants to extract the true meaning of its message. It states:

**"This Book, there is no doubt in it (al-Qur'ân), is a guide to those who keep their duty [the Allâh conscious]" (Chapter 2:2).**

Therefore, every term used in the Arabic Glorious Qur'ân cannot cause one to develop *uncertainty* or *doubt* or to put a person in a position that he or she cannot explain what is meant, unless there is a lack of understanding or a thing is unknown. Even the common doubtful meanings attached to certain terms should not cause a researcher to conclude with irrational conclusions. The reason is that we are told in the Arabic Glorious Qur'ân, "Surely We (Allâh) have made it an Arabic Qur'ân that you may understand."<sup>17</sup> This fact is further supported as follows:

**"Indeed, there has come to you from Allâh, a Light and kitâbum-mubîn (i.e. a 'clear, plain, evident, obvious, patent, perspicuous'<sup>18</sup>, Book or 'that [Book which] makes manifest all that is required to be known')."**<sup>19</sup>

<sup>15</sup> : The Concise Oxford Dictionary Reprinted 1990, 1991.

<sup>16</sup> : Meaning: "unquiet, uneasy, restless. – n. want of quiet: uneasiness, restlessness: to disturb..." (Chambers's Twentieth Century Dictionary New mid-century Version)

<sup>17</sup> : Al-Qur'ân 43:3.

<sup>18</sup> : The word *perspicuous* means: 'easily understood; clearly expressed.'

<sup>19</sup> : Al-Qur'ân 5:15. The dictionary meanings were extracted from the Arabic-English Lexicon, by E. W. Lane, Vol. 1, op. cit., and Hans Wehr A dictionary of Modern Written Arabic by J Milton Cowan Fourth Edition.



Abdullah Yusuf Ali made a very valuable contribution by explaining the word '*Mubîn*' in his footnote. He states:

716. "*Mubîn*: I wish I could translate by a simpler word than "perspicuous". But "plain" may mean unadorned, the opposite of beautiful, and this Book is among the most beautiful that it is the privilege of mankind to read. "Clear" would be right as far as it means "unambiguous, self-evident, not involved in mysteries of origin, history, or meaning, one which every one can understand as to the essentials necessary for him, without the intervention of priests or privileged persons". *Mubîn* has all these meanings, but it suggests, besides, some quality of a shining light, by which we are able to *make* things clear, to distinguish the true from the false. This I think is suggested better by "perspicuous" than the word "clear". Besides it is hardly good idiom to speak of "a clear Book".

Verse two of chapter forty-four states:

"*Wal-kitâbil-mubîn* (i.e.: And the Book, which makes manifest all that is necessarily required to be known)."

After a careful study of the above verses and the application of the Arabic Glorious Qur'ân's own rules for its interpretation, as explained in D above, one ought to find that the teachings of the Arabic Glorious Qur'ân is such that no uncertainty does exists between its covers.

### (1) The term *Îmân* – commonly translated as *faith* or *belief*

The concept of the term *belief* could be very problematic if its English linguistic meaning is applied to the guidance that came from Allâh. We shall reproduce the following meanings of the English term. The term *belief* according to The New Collins Concise Dictionary means:

"1. a principle, etc., accepted as true or real, especially without proof. 2. opinion; conviction. 3. religious faith. 4. trust or confidence, as in a person's abilities."

The Oxford Paperback Dictionary gives the following definition:

"1 the feeling that something is real and true; trust, confidence. 2 something accepted as true; what one believes. 3 acceptance of the teachings of a religion etc.; these teachings."

If the above definitions of the term were applied to the guidance that came from Allâh, then it would mean that it is something that is not based on truth. We find a beautiful principle in the second chapter of the Arabic Glorious Qur'ân, which ought to be applied generally. It states:

"And they say: None shall enter the *Jannah* (Garden or Paradise)<sup>20</sup> except he who is a Jew (i.e. a offspring of a Roman male and a woman of the Sons of Darkness)<sup>21</sup> or a *Naşârâ* (i.e. a

<sup>20</sup> : See section (4) "The Garden" - *al-Jannah*.

<sup>21</sup> : See section (22) The phrase *Banî Isrâ'îl* 'Children of Israel'.

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follower of Constantine, who made the man from Nazareth a god). These are their vain desires. **Say: Bring your proof if you are truthful.**"<sup>22</sup>

Imagine a Muslim believes in the guidance without having proof or ever be able to find proof for one's belief? The Arabic Glorious Qur'an poses the following question:

"And what reason has you that you believe not in Allâh? ..." <sup>23</sup>

From the above two verses of the Arabic Glorious Qur'an it ought to be understood that the basis for one's acceptance of Allâh's existence ought to be based on *proof* and *reason* for one's belief. It is for this reason that the revelation of the Arabic Glorious Qur'an began with an instruction which request one to investigate the creation of Allâh, as it would not be possible to understand why one ought to believe in Allâh. Ponder over the following claim that Allâh has made in chapter 57 verses 1-5, so that one may understand what is meant:

**"Whatever is in the *samâwât*<sup>24</sup> (the entire universe excluding the earth) and the earth declares the glory of Allâh, and He is the Mighty, the Wise.** His is the kingdom of the *samâwât* and the earth. He gives life and causes death; and He is Possessor of power over all things. He is the First and the Last and the Manifest and the Hidden, and He is Knower of all things. He it is Who created the *samâwât* and the earth in six periods, and He is established on the Throne of Power. He knows that which goes down into the earth and that which comes forth out of it, and that which comes down from the *Samâ'a* and that which goes up to it. And He is with you wherever you are. And Allâh is Seer of what you do. His is the kingdom of the *samâwât* and the earth; and to Allâh are (all) affairs returned."

The revelation that gives the instruction to investigate states:

**"*Iqra' bismi Rabb*<sup>25</sup> - *ikal-ladhî khalaq*":**

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<sup>22</sup> : Al-Qur'an 2:111.

<sup>23</sup> : Al-Qur'an 57:8.

<sup>24</sup> : The word *Samâ'* means according to the Arabic-English Lexicon by E. W. Lane: "The higher, or *highest*, or *uppermost*, *part* of anything....Er-Râghib says that the *Samâ'* as opposed to the '*ard*' is fem., and sometimes masc. ..." According to the Tâj al-'Arûs it is also the: "*Canopy of the earth.*" Hence, *As-samâwât* ought to include the known and the unknown parts which comprise the English word universe. It means more than just the heavens. The word 'heaven' is also regarded as a place where God and the angels live. This is rejected in Islâm, as Allâh does not occupy a place. The English word 'universe' which means the entire universe including the earth, cannot be applicable in this instance. The reason for this is that the words *wal'ard* (and the earth) [in most cases] indicates that the earth is excluded from the word *As-samâwât*. It could be that the Arabic word may have some other meanings. The words *wal'ard* may have been used as one can examine or understand some of the secrets or rather the order of some of the earth's components. Most of the universe excluding the earth cannot be examined right now or right from the time the verse was revealed. *As-samâwât* could also refer to the many solar systems. [Please note that the English word 'heavens' is not the equivalent of *samâwât* - according to the English dictionary one ought to understand the 'heavens' to mean the abodes of God and the angels, although it also means: "the firmament surrounding the earth"].

<sup>25</sup> : According to Ar-Râghib al-Isfahânî, it means '*to nurture a thing in such a manner as to make it attain one condition after another until its goal of completion*' Mufradât alfâz al-Qur'an by ar-Râghib al-Isfahânî.

(1). 'Study to uncover the order of the creation, of the One who fosters a thing in such a manner as to make it attain one condition after another until it reaches its goal of completion, in order to understand His creation.'<sup>26</sup>

In section 13 we have given a full explanation of the first five verses of chapter 96. Once a study is made of the verses quoted in this section of the Arabic Glorious Qur'an thus far - then, the question of *cause and effect* comes to mind, as it is one of the basis that cause one to believe in Allâh. The implementation of chapter 96 verses 1 brings home the understanding of a Creator who is unlike His creation, as the order that governs a created thing cannot be like its Maker. There would be no difference and many problems will arise. For example, can a motorcar and its manufacturer be the same in their nature? Furthermore, the vast *unknown factors* in Arabic Glorious Qur'an which one encounter makes one see the message in chapter 57 verses 1-5 and in chapter 96, once a study is made. However, it is the *unknown factors* contained in the Arabic Glorious Qur'an from which its truth are discovered from time to time that causes one to believe in revelation sent to humankind from Allâh. Humankind cannot reveal the *unknown* – but, at the same time the *unknown* information is one of the factors, when uncovered, establish the basis for the belief in Allâh's existence. It is for these reasons that we have **translated the Arabic term *îmân* or *âmanû* as used in many verses of the Arabic Glorious Qur'an as: 'those who have carefully studied and analysed a subject and has found the truth about it. Then, as a result of the findings believes in its truth based on evidence, and acted upon it.'** The Arabic term has many branches, which are used in Islâm, and has many meanings, yet it never includes something that cannot be proved. Please note that when we use the English term *belief* then it means, that which is based on facts and not according to the English dictionary meaning. The question of the *unseen* Allâh must be answered from the fact that creation and Allâh is not alike. The Arabic Glorious Qur'an states:

**"There is nothing like unto Him." [Al-Qur'an 42:11, translation of The Noble Qur'an op. Cit.].**

The '1926' "Heisenberg's Uncertainty Principle" supports the notion that if something cannot be observed experimentally, it does not necessarily imply that it is non-existent.

The next question that is posed is about *life after death*. Why must we believe in *life after death*? The answer to this question is based on the fact that once something has been created it cannot be reduced to something not existing, it can take another form, but it can never become something non-existing. Therefore, one is forced to believe in the continued existence of one self, which is termed *life after death* of which we do not know the form, in which one will be. However, the certainty of revelation has removed all doubts about it.

Of the rewards of the hereafter no one knows what it will be, the Divine Book states:

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<sup>26</sup> : Al-Qur'an 96:1.

**“So no person knows what refreshment of the eyes is hidden for them: a reward for what they did.”<sup>27</sup>**

Let us analyse the subject from another perspective. The law of procreation is explained in the Arabic Glorious Qur'an in about twenty-six verses. These laws are in compliance with the known tested laws. Yet, there exist a *belief* that nabî 'Îsâ (p.b.u.h.) was born without a father. This means that the twenty-six verses of the Arabic Glorious Qur'an have been over-ruled by that *belief*. The question must be resolved, as we have a serious problem. Allâh answers the question in the following verse:

**“So set thy face for *Dîn* (the way of life as prescribed by Allâh), being upright, the *fitrah* (nature) made by Allâh in which He has created human beings. There is no altering Allâh's creation. That is the right *Dîn* (the way of life as prescribed by Allâh) - but most people know not.”<sup>28</sup>**

Must we not reject the *belief* of the people? Or must we reject the above verse?

## **(2) *Bayyî-nat* ('clear arguments or proofs or evidence')**

The term in its plural form is being used about fifty one times in the Arabic Glorious Qur'an. The meaning of *bayyî-nat* is often misunderstood. Here follows definitions of the term *bayyî-nat* according to Lane and Hans Wehr.

(i) The term *bayyî-nat* according to Lane means:

“An evidence, an indication, a demonstration, a proof, a voucher, or an argument, such as is manifest, or clear, whether intellectual or perceived by sense.”

(ii) According to the Hans Wehr *bayyina* pl. - *ât* means:

“Clear proof, indisputable evidence; evidence (*Isl. Law*); a document serving as evidence.”

The words “proofs” and “arguments” can be singled out as key words in the above definitions. Thus to further clarify the meaning of *bayyî-nat*, - here follows the definitions of “proofs” and “arguments”.

(a) The English word “*proof*” according to an English dictionary means:

**“Proof** (pru:f) *n.* **1.** any evidence that establishes or helps to establish the truth, validity, quality, etc., of something.”<sup>29</sup>

The Chambers Twentieth Century Dictionary gives the meaning as follows:

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<sup>27</sup> : Al-Qur'an 32:17.

<sup>28</sup> : Al-Qur'an 30:30.

<sup>29</sup> : The New Collins Concise Dictionary 1985.

### Explanation of Chapter 3 v 7- Understanding the two types of verses of the Qur'an

“That which proves or establishes the truth of anything: the fact, act. or process of proving or showing to be true: demonstration: evidence that convinces the mind and goes toward determining the decision of a court: an instrument of evidence in documentary form...”

(b) The word “*argument*” is misunderstood by most. According the Chambers twentieth Century Dictionary, the word means:

“Proof: evidence: a reason or series of reasons offered or possible towards proof or inducement: exchange of such reasons: debate: matter of debate or contention: a summary of subject-matter: hence contents (Shakespeare): a quantity upon which another depends, or under which it is to be sought in a table (*math.*).”<sup>30</sup>

#### (3) *Human and Mortal*

“Say: [Muḥammad] **I am only a mortal like you** – it is revealed to me that your Deity is one Deity. So whoever hopes to meet his *Rabb*, he should do good deeds, and join no one in the service of his *Rabb*” [Al-Qur’ân 18:110].

##### (i) **Definitions:**

(a) The word **human** can function as an adjective or a noun:

“Belonging or pertaining to or of the nature of man or mankind: having the qualities of a man or the limitations of man: humane: not invidiously superior: genial. -- **n.** (coll.) a human being.--adj. **humane** (*hû-mân’*) having the feelings proper to man: kind: tender: merciful: humanising, as *humane letters*, classical, elegant, polite. Adv.”<sup>31</sup>

(b) The word **mortal** can function as an adjective or a noun:

“**1.** (of living beings, especially human beings) subject to death. **2.** of or involving life or the world.”<sup>32</sup>

(c) A human or a mortal can either be a man or a woman.

The word **man** as a noun means:

“Human being: mankind: a grown-up human male: ... one possessing a distinctively manly character.”<sup>33</sup>

The word **woman** is a noun and means:

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<sup>30</sup> : Chambers Twentieth Century Dictionary.

<sup>31</sup> : Chambers Twentieth Century Dictionary.

<sup>32</sup> : The New Collins Concise Dictionary 1985.

<sup>33</sup> : *ibid.*

“An adult female of the human race.”<sup>34</sup>

The main difference between a man and a woman is that the man carries the male reproductive organs and the woman carries no male reproductive organs. In simple words, the male determines the sex of the offspring.

(ii) **The characteristics of human being**

From the above definitions one can conclude that a human being is either a mortal male or female. They share **common** characteristics. There is essentially no distinction between males and females, except for their different biological functions. The most **noticeable**, **commonly known** and **undisputed** characteristics of a human being are as follows:

- (a) A human being must eat food and drink water.
- (b) A human being must sleep.
- (c) A human being must breathe in oxygen.
- (d) A human being cannot stay without food for a very long time.
- (e) A human being must answer the call of nature.
- (f) A human being cannot stay deep under the sea or water for a very long time without special equipment, in order to maintain the needed human conditions.
- (g) A human being cannot stay in a cave, which is sealed off so that he or she is deprived of getting oxygen and food for a very long time.
- (h) A human being cannot travel into outer space without special equipment, in order to maintain the needed human conditions.
- (i) A human being cannot understand a subject without using his or her brains or rather their faculties in a rational manner.
- (j) A sane human being cannot accept an explanation, if it is not based on rationality, unless he or she is not worried if it is the truth or not.
- (k) Most human beings do not reach the age of one hundred and fifty years. However, should a person reach the age of one hundred and fifty years, he or she will in most cases become senile. Normally, most become senile much earlier.
- (l) A human being must die.

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<sup>34</sup> : The New Collins Concise Dictionary 1985.

- (m) Once a human being dies, he or she has no contact with people in this life.
- (n) A human being, by its very nature, does not have supernatural powers.
- (o) No human being can perform a miracle i.e. performing similar acts as the Creator.
- (p) All human beings came into existence from a male and female, this is known as procreation.
- (q) It was from human beings that Allâh has chosen His messengers (p.b.u.<sup>35</sup> them) whom He has sent with guidance.
- (r) Most human beings instinctively use their innate faculties to increase their knowledge as they acquire information from child to adult. Some succeed while most follow slavishly what they are taught formally or informally. The system of observation and experiment is one of the most important methods of exploring the world. There is another very important means of acquiring information and knowledge. This occurs via an **external** source, but we shall discuss this in section (6) "The Angels" - *Al-Malâ'ikah*.

From observation, one can thus conclude that human beings behave according to a certain nature.

All the important characteristics mentioned above are not in contradiction with the teachings of the Arabic Glorious Qur'ân. In fact, the guidance is so designed that a human being may develop to his or her full potential, if the guidance is used appropriately.

(iii) **The nature of a bashar (mortal) in the context of the Arabic Glorious Qur'ân**

Chapter 30:30 states:

**"So set thy face for *dîn* (the way of life as prescribed by Allâh), being upright, the *fiṭrah* (nature) made by Allâh in which He has created human beings. There is no *altering* Allâh's creation. That is the right *dîn* (the way of life as prescribed by Allâh) - but most people know not."**<sup>36</sup>

The above verse informs us that the **laws** of Allâh are not subject to change. It confirms that the nature according to which Allâh has created human beings, as discussed in 3(ii) (a) to (q) above, **cannot change** under any circumstances. The last one, i.e. (r), can however be improved.

If anyone disagrees with this, then we ask, "Bring your proof if you are truthful."<sup>37</sup>

Please note that it is not correct to infer a meaning concerning **bashar** as has been done in the following quotation:

<sup>35</sup> : Please note that the abbreviation (p.b.u.) means 'peace be upon' or in the case of one prophet, we use it as follows: (p.b.u.h) = 'peace be upon him.'

<sup>36</sup> : Al-Qur'ân 30:30.

<sup>37</sup> : Al-Qur'ân 2:111.

“When it is said by some Muslims that the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) is “like” us with reference to the Qur’anic *ayah*:

***Qul innamâ ana’ basharun mithlukum***

**Say, I am a human being as you are human beings. (Q18: 110)**

then two translations are possible. One leads to *kufir* and the other to *imân*. If “*mithlukum*” is translated as “like you” then it leads a person to *kufir*. The drunkard, like the murderer, the person who is evil personified?”<sup>38</sup>

A simple verse could be misconstrued in order to manipulate it so that it could convey messages other than that which it was intended to convey, as seen above. The same verse is correctly translated as can be seen in ‘The Noble Qur’an’ op.cit:

**“Say (O Muḥammad (ﷺ): “I am only a man like you...”**

The verse clearly refers to the human nature of the ***bashar*** (mortal) and not to the personal character of a human being.

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***This is a summarized version. The full document is available free: email: ymoosa786@hotmail.com***

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<sup>38</sup> : Islam to the Modern Mind p. 134.